

VZCZCXRO3138  
PP RUEHDBU  
DE RUEHMO #4786/01 2741100  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 011100Z OCT 07  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4239  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHDX/MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 004786

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/01/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [RS](#)  
SUBJECT: OTHER RUSSIA NOMINATES GARRY KASPAROV FOR PRESIDENT

Classified By: Political M/C Alice G. Wells: 1.4 (b,d).

Summary

1. (SBU) About 500 Other Russia loyalists met September 30 in the Concert Hall of the Izmaylovo Hotel Complex to bless an alternative list of Duma deputy candidates and nominate a longshot candidate for President. United Civic Front Chairman Garry Kasparov won the presidential primary race, squeaking by former OR participant, ex-Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov. Kasparov, ex-Central Banker Viktor Gerashchenko, and National Bolshevik Eduard Limonov will head the movement's election list. The one-day congress was picketed by about 150 members of the pro-Kremlin youth movement "Young Russia," but went forward without interruption. Sergey Udaltsov's "Vanguard of Red Youth" used the congress to announce that his organization had decided to leave the OR fold. Udaltsov told the delegates that OR was not equipped to take on the Putin administration, and predicted that Kasparov would not be able to build broad-based support for his candidacy. Udaltsov's departure, following on the heels of Kasyanov's, further marginalized OR as Russia's registered parties wrapped up their congresses and submitted their party lists to the Central Election Commission. There was minimal police presence at the congress. End summary.

Kasparov Default  
Candidate

2. (C) The outcome of the Other Russia presidential primaries that preceded the September 30 congress left Garry Kasparov the winner in 22 regions of the 57 regions participating over second-place finisher, ex-premier Mikhail Kasyanov, who did not officially participate in the contest. (Kasyanov's Popular Democratic Union and Other Russia are no longer cooperating, and a PDU representative issued a statement condemning OR's inclusion of Kasyanov in its presidential primaries after the former PM had already left the organization.) Kasparov's nomination as OR's candidate was could not have been forecast in June, when Kasparov insisted to all that he was not a candidate. Ex-Central Banker Viktor Gerashchenko's still-born candidacy, the departure of Kasyanov, and the frantic efforts of Duma Deputy Vladimir Ryzhkov to remain in the Duma and not in Other Russia, all conspired to leave Kasparov the candidate of last resort as the date of the congress approached. Kasparov has described himself to us in previous meetings as a reluctant candidate, but his support for Gerashchenko, who never made a serious effort to campaign and did not win the support of even diehard Kasparov allies like Eduard Limonov, left Kasparov the only game in town.

3. (SBU) In addition to Kasparov, Gerashchenko, and Limonov, the congress was attended by political commentator Viktor Shenderovich, St. Petersburg OR member Sergey Gulyaev,

"Working Russia's" Viktor Anpilov, and "For Human Rights" Chairman Lev Ponomarev. Kasparov in his keynote speech, told delegates that OR had "added an element of unpredictability to the national political life." The chief goal of the primaries was to "return elections to the people," rather than to win seats in the Duma or capture the presidency. In his speech, Anpilov urged delegates to invalidate their ballots in a gesture of unhappiness with the process. Limonov told the congress that OR representatives would demand that the Central Election Commission register its list.

14. (SBU) The congress went forward with little interference from the authorities or the pro-Kremlin youth group "Young Russia." (About 150 Young Russia activists picketed the concert hall.) OR was able to overcome initial resistance from the Izmaylovo management to rent the hall, and there was no apparent attempt by the police to prevent OR delegates from attending the event.

15. Sergey Udaltsov's "Vanguard of Red Youth" used the congress to announce that his organization had decided to leave the OR fold. Udaltsov told the delegates that OR was not equipped to take on the Putin administration, and predicted that Kasparov would not be able to build broad-based support for his candidacy. In addition to Udaltsov, members of the Communist Party, some of whom had earlier flirted with the possibility of cooperating with OR, were absent from the September 30 congress. KPRF First Deputy Chairman Ivan Melnikov dismissed the OR congress, and described the movement as "marginal," and lacking a strategy. Yabloko's Yavlinskiy characterized Kasparov as an entertaining, but meaningless diversion for the western media.

MOSCOW 00004786 002 OF 002

Comment  
-----

16. (C) The congress leaves OR with a party list, but no registered party to deposit it at Central Election Commission headquarters. The low-key police presence at the congress suggests that even the authorities have understood, after months of overreaction to OR marches and meetings, that the movement poses no threat, and can be left to quietly run out its string.  
Burns